

The erection of stables and the retention of car park,
manege and horsewalker at:

Tir Cook Farm, Treharris, Merthyr Tydfil

Planning, Design and Access Statement (November 2025)

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

This Planning, Design & Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared support of a planning application submission for the erection of a stables and retention of a horse walker, manege and car park at Tir Cook Farm, Treharris..

As a 'living document' this statement will be updated periodically through the planning process in order to illustrate the evolution of this scheme. This statement seeks to communicate the development, demonstrate the design process which has been undertaken and detail the policy and design objectives with which the proposed development complies.

1.2 Location

The site is within the Countryside, as defined in the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031. It comprises the Tir Cook Farm bungalow and associated stables, yard, manege, cap park and horsewalker. The site is located some 1.7km to the north of the Treharris Settlement along the highway known as Twynygargreg as illustrated by the red star on the image below right.

Application Site:



1.0 Introduction

1.3 Proposed Development

The proposal is for the retention of unauthorised works relating to a car parking area, manège and horse walker and for the retention of and expansion to the stables. In terms of the use of the site as a riding school 4no. riding sessions for a maximum of 8no. people are provided on a Saturday between 9am and 4pm; a single session on a Sunday between 11am and 1pm; a single session on a Tuesday between 4pm and 6pm and a single session on a Thursday between 4pm and 6pm. Monday, Wednesday and Friday are rest days.

1.4 Site History

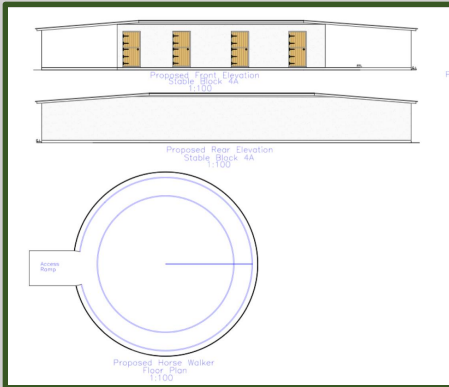
The recent planning history relating to this site is summarised below:

P/21/0228 - Extend and raise roof of garage to accommodate first floor gymnasium ancillary to the use of Tir Cook Farm Bungalow - Refused planning permission on 12 August 2021, Dismissed at appeal 26 May 2022

P/18/0370 - Proposed stable block extension for livery use - Granted planning permission on 2 May 2019

P/16/0317 - Erection of single storey rear extension with living accommodation in the roof space, new dormer window in front roof plane and other minor alterations - Granted planning permission on 9 November 2016

P/07/0386 - Extension to sides and rear and alteration to pitch and ridge height of roof - Granted planning permission on 30 August 2007



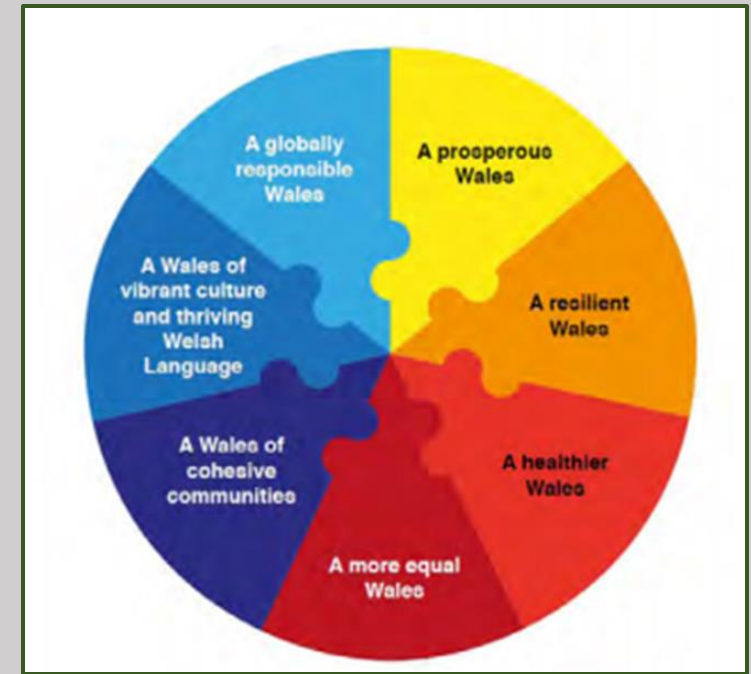
2.0 Policy Context

2.1 Planning Policy Wales

Welsh Government planning policy is contained within Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (February 2021) and Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 which was published in February 2024. PPW 12 is centred around Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Planning Policy Wales establishes the key principles for the planning system in Wales and the Local Development Plans apply these principles to their areas and shape them by evidence. PPW states that 'the planning system should create sustainable places which are attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcoming, healthy and friendly. Development proposals should create the conditions to bring people together, making them want to live, work and play in areas with a senses of place and well-being'.

Paragraph 3.3 sets out how 'good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. Design is not just about the architecture of a building but the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment and between people and places. To achieve sustainable development, design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, economic, environmental, cultural aspects of the development, including how space is used, how buildings and the public realm support this use, as well as its construction, operation, management and its relationship with the surrounding area'.



2.0 Policy Context

2.2 Technical Advice Note 12: Design

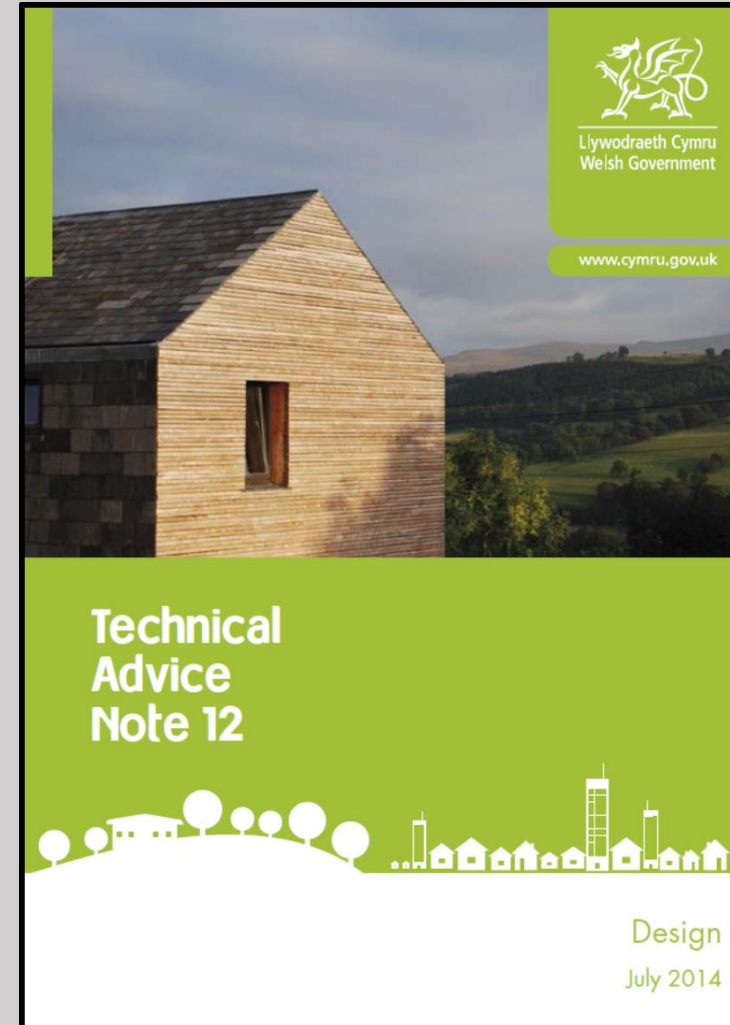
The Welsh Government updated Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design in 2014. It advocates a process model for design drawing from a contextual analysis of the surroundings of a development to achieve a well designed, flexible and adaptable development.

The key aspects are:

- Access;
- Character (Amount, Layout, Scale, Appearance, Landscaping);
- Community Safety;
- Environmental Sustainability; and
- Movement.

It also identifies the objectives of good design as:

- Ensuring ease of access for all;
- Sustaining or enhancing local character;
- Promoting legible development;
- Promoting successful relations between public and private space;
- Promoting quality, choice and variety;
- Promoting innovative design;
- Ensuring attractive, safe public spaces;
- Security through natural surveillance;
- Achieving efficient use and protection of natural resources;
- Enhancing biodiversity;
- Designing for change; and
- Promoting sustainable means of travel.



2.0 Policy Context

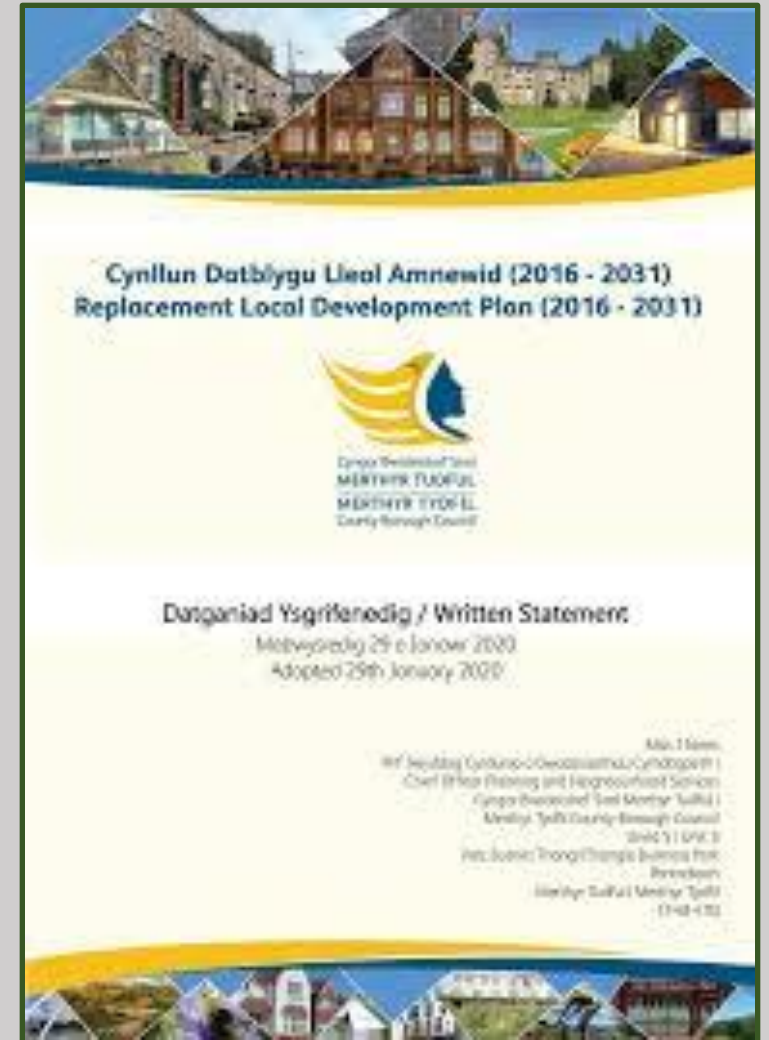
2.3 Adopted Local Development Plan

The following policies of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031 are relevant to the determination of this application proposal:

- SW4: Settlement boundaries
- SW9: Planning Obligations
- SW11: Sustainable design and Placemaking
- SW12: Improving the Transport Network
- EnW1: Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Resilience
- EnW2: Internationally and Nationally Protected Sites and Species
- EnW3: Regionally Important Geological Sites, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Local Nature Reserves and Priority Habitats and Species
- EnW4: Environmental Protection
- EnW5: Landscape Protection
- EcW7: Tourism, Leisure and Recreation Development
- EcW10: Sustainably Supplying Minerals
- EcW13: Minerals Safeguarding

Furthermore, any planning application would be determined having regard to the advice contained within the following Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Notes:

- Note 2, Planning Obligations
- Note 4, Sustainable Design
- Note 5, Nature and Development



3.0 Site Context

3.1 Site Characteristics

The site is located in the open countryside and is within Special Landscape Area 5: Gelligaer and Taf Bargoed. Policy EnW5 seeks to protect these areas, allowing developments that are sensitive and respect the character and distinctiveness of the area.

The surrounding landscape is patently rural, being sparsely populated and accommodating large areas of farmland and woodland. Whilst it is acknowledged that there are transmitters, wind turbines, and scattered farmsteads within the area surrounding the site, the relative absence of development makes a substantially positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. The impact of the proposal on this will be an important consideration of any future application.

In terms of the proposed stable structure and horse walker, these are located within an established yard area. Whilst they would increase the built development within this, effectively enclosing the yard, it is considered that they would form part of the existing collection of buildings and would be viewed as a typical farmstead. As such, these elements would not appear out of place or uncharacteristic of the rural setting and no significant concern is raised in terms of their visual impact.

The manège and car park are located on the other side of the private access road and have encroached into an area of previously undeveloped land. With respect to the manège, it is noted that this is a feature that is not out of place within a rural setting. In addition, its low profile and the existing stone boundary wall help to screen it from the main access road to the south/south west of the site.



4.0 Access and Movement

4.1 Accessibility

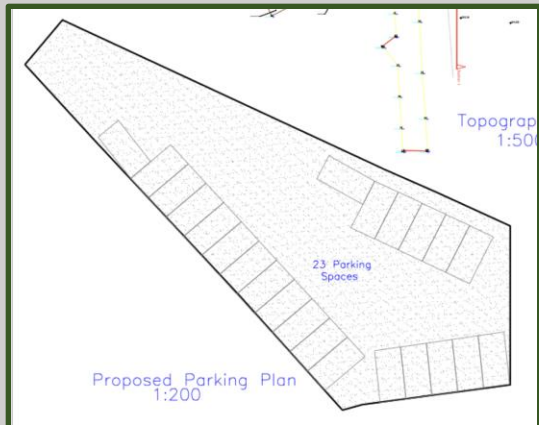
The site is accessed directly from a public highway known as Twynygarreg. Thereafter, the car park, stables, manege and horsewalker are accessed via a gravel track that rises gently from the level of the highway.

The manege and stable yard are relatively flat, although the car park is relatively uneven as it broadly follows the previous topography of the site.

4.2 Car Parking

The car park which is proposed to be retained as part of this application provides space for up to 23no. parking spaces as illustrated by the image copied below. It is finished with gravel chippings and is tucked between the manege and the dry stone wall illustrated opposite.

The car park provides for sufficient space for easy turning and manoeuvring so as to facilitate exiting the site in a forward gear. Sufficient spaces are also provided in the event of any overlapping sessions, noting that an hour gap is generally retained between sessions and a maximum of 8no. riders are permitted at each session.



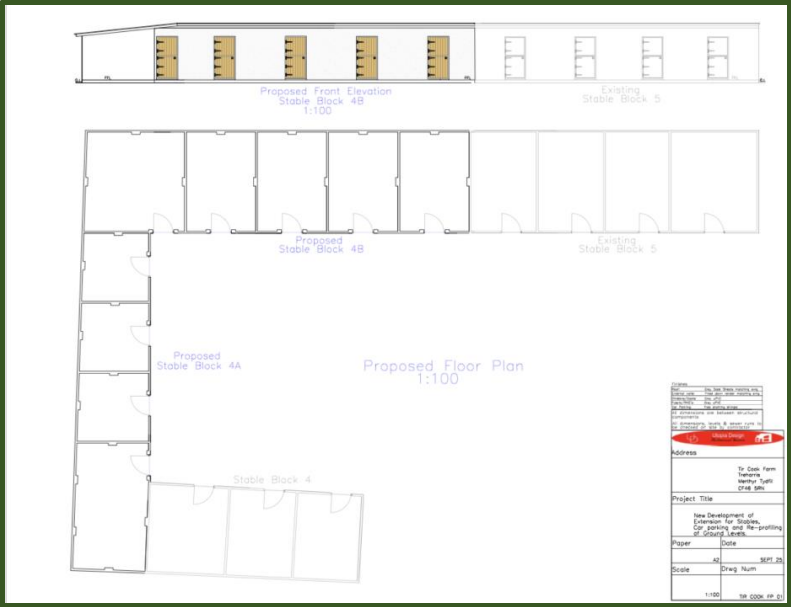
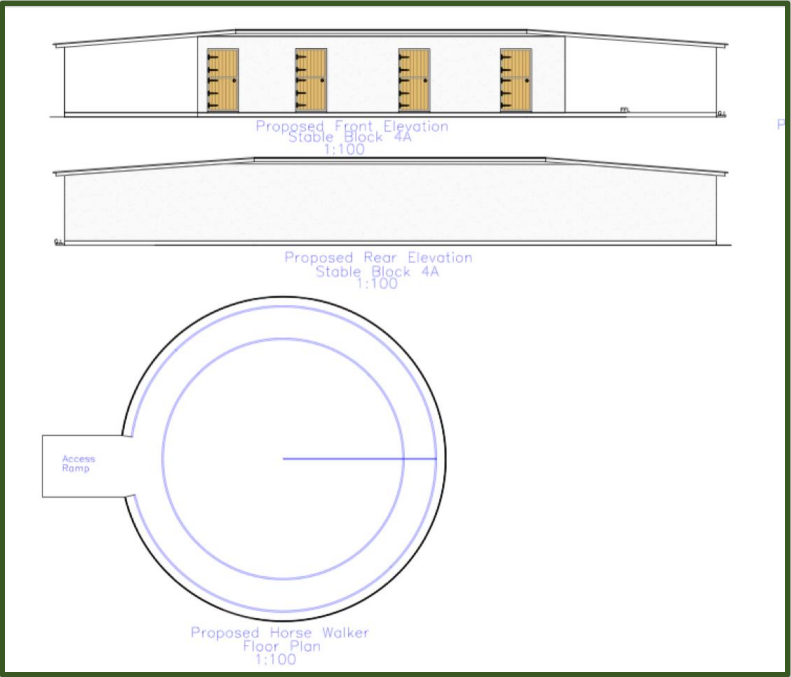
5.0 Character

5.1 Amount and Layout

In addition to the retention of the car park, manege and horse walker illustrated on the plans and images opposite and below, it is also proposed to erect an 'L' shaped extension to the existing stables (connecting both structures). 8no. stables will be provided which will be utilised by horses and for storage purposes.

The horse walker is located to the south of the existing stable block and would measure approximately 11m in diameter.

The manege area is located to the east of the farm track and measures approximately 30m in width by 50m in length.



5.0 Character

5.2 Scale

The scale and massing of the proposed development has been designed to integrate with its surroundings. The stables would be of a scale to match the existing buildings as illustrated by the plans. The horse walker is also relatively small in diameter at 11m and its height would not protrude beyond the existing stable buildings. Whilst the car park and manege areas are larger in scale, they would integrate well into their surroundings.

5.3 Appearance

As set out in the application, the materials proposed for use in this development are as follows:

- Walls – Fined down render
- Roof – Metal sheet
- Doors – Timber
- Hard surfaces – the car park is finished with black gravel chippings and the manege is finished with sand.

5.4 Landscaping

It should be noted that the application is also supported by a Green infrastructure Statement. 170 of native hedgerow planting is proposed as part of the scheme as detailed in the GIS and will serve to provide a biodiversity net gain and connectivity. Details of any planting can be secured via a suitably worded planning condition. Should any additional screening be required, this can also be requested via the same condition.

It is concluded in the GIS that this development integrates equestrian infrastructure within a working farmyard whilst delivering significant biodiversity enhancement. The proposals confine built structures to existing hardstanding, avoiding semi-natural habitat impacts, and create 170m of native mixed species hedgerow where none existed, alongside compensatory roosting/nesting structures and sensitive lighting preserving dark corridors.



6.0 Community Safety

6.1 Boundary Treatments

The site is well secured by a mix of mature hedgerow and dry stone walling. Post and rail fencing is also provided within the site to enclose the manege and the fields.

6.3 Surveillance

The applicant resides at Tir cook Farm bungalow at the centre of the site. Accordingly, the site is well overlooked at all times.



7.0 Environmental Sustainability

7.1 Environmental Sustainability

Whilst it is acknowledged the site is not located within a sustainable local centre. However, its countryside location is essential in that scheme comprises the expansion of a local business located within the countryside. The scheme also comprises supporting infrastructure for a recreation/leisure use which is in accordance with the criteria set out under LDP Policy SW4 and EcW7.

It is acknowledged that some concern has been raised regarding the storage of manure. Going forward, it is proposed that manure will be composted on the concrete slab area to the north west of the existing stable buildings (see opposite) thereby preventing any nutrient from leaching into the groundwater. Manure and soiled bedding will be collected daily and stored in the concrete slab area. The pile will be turned regularly to introduce air and evenly distribute moisture and heat with a view to creating compost in approximately 2 months. Finished compost will then be applied to the farmland by spreading thin layers of no more than 0.5 inches.

As referred to, the creation of 170m hedgerow habitat, year-round food sources, linear vegetation features, artificial structures, and bat/hedgehog corridors linking to wider semi-natural habitats will deliver demonstrable improvement in biodiversity capacity, achieving net gain per Planning Policy Wales requirements.



8.0 Conclusion

This Planning, Design and Access Statement shows that the proposed development meets the objectives of good design as set out in TAN 12 because:

The accessibility of the site ensures access for all by meeting the relevant policies and regulations with regard to car parking, pathways, entrances and future adaptability.

The amount, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping of the proposed development are all in keeping with the character of the surrounding rural area.

The proposed development is legible, links public and private space ensuring that both are attractive and safe.

In terms of community safety, the proposed development includes secured by design principles, acceptable boundary treatments and natural surveillance as well as the ability to promote ownership and responsibility.

The proposed development is environmentally sustainable in that it meets and exceeds the relevant sustainable design standards required of it, achieves efficient use and protection of natural resources and enhances biodiversity.

It is also well served by the local highway network and meets the Council's parking guidelines.